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## Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable MARK L. PRYOR, a Senator from the State of Arkansas.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Almighty God, sustainer of humanity, we thank You for commanding light to shine out of darkness, for stretching out the heavens, and laying the foundation of the Earth. We praise You for calling us to be Your people, for revealing Your purposes and Your sacred word, and for dealing patiently with our pride and disobedience.

Bless the Members of this body and all who support them. Give them such trust in You that, holding onto Your word, they may be strong in this and every time of need. Impart to them, Lord, grace to permit You to order their steps. Give them the gift of Your Holy Spirit that they may be faithful servants and stewards of Your will.

We pray in the Name of our Lord and Savior. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable MARK L. PRYOR led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, June 12, 2008.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable MARK L. PRYOR, a Senator from the State of Arkansas, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. PRYOR thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following the remarks of myself and Senator MCCONNELL, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 3101, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act, with the time until 3 p.m. equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees. Senators GRASSLEY, BAUCUS, MCCONNELL, and REID of Nevada will control the final 40 minutes, with 10 minutes each under their control. The order of speakers will be as I have mentioned. At 3 p.m., the Senate will proceed to vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to the bill.

### MEASURE PLACED ON CALENDAR—S. 3118

Mr. REID. Mr. President, S. 3118 is at the desk and due for a second reading.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will state the bill for the second time.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3118) to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to preserve beneficiary access to care by preventing a reduction in the Medicare physician fee schedule, to improve the quality of care by advancing value based purchasing, electronic health records, and electronic prescribing, and to maintain and improve access to care in rural areas, and for other purposes.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I object to any further proceedings at this time regarding this bill.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection is heard. The bill will be placed on the calendar.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

### GRADUAL ADJUSTMENT DAY TWO

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today the national average for a gallon of regular unleaded gasoline hit another all-time high of \$4.06. For truckers it's even worse, with the average cost of diesel now at \$4.79 a gallon.

Every American is suffering the effects of high gas prices. But low- and middle-income families are hurting the most. Many now spend a significant portion of their income just getting to and from work. A good number of people in eastern Kentucky are spending 15 percent of their income just on gas.

Some people are taking second jobs just to cover the cost of getting to and from their primary jobs.

Prices are so high Democrats are starting to talk about gas prices being a serious problem. A number of them spoke yesterday about the effect that gas prices have on the wider economy.

The junior Senator from Colorado told us about a farmer in Kit Carson County who is worried he won't be able to afford the diesel fuel he needs to harvest his wheat crop at the end of the summer.

The junior Senator from Montana said manufacturers in his State are at risk of shutting down, that truckers are struggling to make ends meet, and farmers are struggling to pay for fertilizer. The junior Senator from Minnesota said the people of her State are lining up around the block at the

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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